COINQUEST, being a COUNTERMARK COLLECTORS' CIRCULAR

... Publication for Collectors of: Countermarked, Cut and Holed Coins, Tokens and Medals; Siege and Necessity Pieces; Love Tokens; and, Numismatic Publications.

MAY, 1975 VOLUME 0, NUMBER 0

Greetings, Fellow Numismatist:

You're urged to read the following article completely. Quite honestly, it's a "pitch" for a few of your scarce spending dollars, but it can save far more money than it costs; furthermore, it can save an even more valuable "commodity ..." your time.

Along the way you'll be able to "skim the cream off the top" in the form of added knowledge ... knowledge about that elusive field of countermarks. — CG

As a collector or dealer, how many times have you looked at a countermark (cmk,) or a counterstamp (csp,) if you prefer, on a coin, token, or whatever, and wondered what it was?

Mulling over the possibilities, you probably wondered where and when it was done ... and by whom and why. Then, someplace in your thinking, haven't you asked yourself, " ... wonder what the thing's worth?"

Let's assume that you have a decent basic library, say, about 250 volumes; you go to it and pour through page after page of catalogs ... four or five hours, even longer, but you can't identify the little rascal.

The wife calls you to dinner, or your son yells to you that THE big ball game is on TV, or, there's a sudden press of business in the shop; you throw IT into a drawer or cigar box, reminding yourself to, "... get back to that thing one of these days soon."

Do you really get back to it soon? Unlikely. Oh, it's dragged out of the darkness now and then, especially when you meet someone who might be able to identify it, but that isn't too often.

(Continued on Back Page)

CQ To Reveal Crowned "V" CMK Origin

How much would you be willing to pay for a VF specimen of the "Crowned V" countermark, usually attributed to Canada or France, on an 1848A French five - franc piece?

Less than $25? As much as $250? More?

Mentally place your order for one, or, better still, drop me a postcard stating what price you'd be willing to pay for such a piece. (Ignore the intrinsic or rarity value of the coin.)

This is a "game;" I don't have any "Crowned V" countermarked coins to sell, but I will reveal its origin in the first regular issue of Coinquest, and whether or not you "paid" too much for such a coin, or if you got a "bargain."

A remote clue: Queen Victoria ascended her throne in 1837.

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CMK Topic Matter Unlimited

CQ will cover a vast range of topic matter in each issue, space permitting. In order to stimulate readers' thinking, listed here are a few possible topics for discussion. (Articles, please!)

What is the oldest known cmk? The oldest known siege or necessity pieces? What is the rarest and most valuable cmk?

What is the greatest number of cmks found on any one numismatic item (numisitem ... coin, token, medal or chit, for CQ readership.)

What is the most elaborate love token? Are there more than one of any particular love token? (Excluding cuff links.)

Has anyone attempted to catalog love tokens? Are the authors (engravers) known of any grouping of LTs?

Can anyone establish who made the first LT?

What's the difference between countermark (cmk,) and counterstamp (csp,) if any? (See article on definitions and abbreviations.)

Should hacienda tokens (from any area) be included in coverage by CQ? (Whether or not they are cmkd.)

What format should catalogs be printed in? Should all cmks be included, or just those that have been attributed?

The questions asked herein are only "the tip of the iceberg." Readers' opinions in this area are solicited.

Free Classified Ads To New Subscribers

New subscribers who submit their subscription fees prior to the June 25 D-Day (decision day,) will be entitled to receive two free classified insertions.

The ads must run unchanged in two consecutive issues during the first year of publication. Twenty words is the limit to each ad, but names and addresses will not count for this introductory offer only.

For the first two issues, classified headings are limited to: Wanted; For Sale; Trades; and, Announcements.

"Blind" ads are unacceptable unless CQ acts as an intermediary, in which case, a box number will be assigned the advertiser.

A mailing fee of one dollar must be added for each blind ad.

CLASSIFIED RATES are ten cents per word, excluding ZIP code. Minimum charge for any ad is one dollar.

Cash, check or M.O. with each classified order, please.

About This Issue

This sample issue of Coinquest is merely a test of collector response to such an idea; if the response is poor, then you're looking at one of the shortest-lived publications on record. (One issue, then, POW!)

That way the publisher loses only a few dollars, would-be subscribers get their money back, then everyone returns to his same old routine.

This issue was planned for only four pages, but future issues may be six, eight. . .even more pages.

If you'd like to receive CQ on a regular basis, subscribe now; if not, give it to someone who might be interested. Otherwise, throw it in the trash, but, before you do, try to buy an early issue of one/some of the other hobby publications.

CQ Seeks Patrons, Articles, Photographs

CQ has writing committments from two leading, respected numismatists, (out of three asked,) but they aren't enough. Others will be asked, but the need for new names and faces in the hobby isn't lessened by any number of "old timers."

Fresh ideas ... new approaches to old, standing problems, particularly in CQ's "domain," are urgently needed; relatively, it's an untapped field, compared to the more routine aspects of numismatics.

Those readers who have always "... planned to write an article about so-and-so," should get busy now and outline an article on paper. It doesn't have to be a Shakespearean masterpiece ... "Just the facts, ma'am." Don't worry about grammar, spelling, etc. The scribe can take it from there ... that's his contribution to the program.

It's requested only that articles be typewritten, double-spaced, with a minimum of one-inch margins all around.

Photographs accompanying editorial copy should be a minimum of four by five inches with a glossy finish.

There isn't any pay involved in this venture, not for the foreseeable future, anyhow ... just the satisfaction of sharing with others.

CQ Offers CMK Definitions

Countermark definitions and abbreviations often tend to confuse the collector, sometimes the specialist. To "clear the air" a bit, CQ will use the terms detailed below.

As one of the goals of CQ is a definition of terms, it's to be hoped that a group or panel of experts in the field can establish a set of terms acceptable and understood by the entire numismatic fraternity.

1. Countermark, (cmk;) verb: to place a countermark on or over the original design of a coin, token, medal or chit, by some manner of striking, hammering or punching.

2. Countermark, (cmk;) noun: A letter, number or device, singularly or in groups, or combinations, usually found on numismatic items.

3. Chopmark, (chop;) noun: An orthographical representation of the Sino-Tibetan group of languages, sometimes found on numismatic items. A countermark.

4. Shroffmark, (shroff;) noun: As number 3, but representing the Indic group of languages.

5. Punchhole, (pch;) noun: An opening, a hole or aperture that has been cut or punched through a coin, token, medal or chit.

6. Punchpiece, (ppc;) noun: That segment or piece resulting from being punchholed. May be cmkd.

7. Countercut, (cut;) noun: a segment of an original coin, token, medal or chit that has been cut or severed into several pieces. May be cmkd.

8. Siege and Necessity Pieces, (snap;) noun: An item manufactured, usually by hand, for use as a medium of exchange during times of siege (war,) or during other times when the supply of acceptable circulating "money" was inadequate.

9. Love Token (LT;) noun: A coin, token, medal or chit upon which has been engraved, etched or scratched, any group of letters, numbers or devices, or combinations thereof.

Readers are invited to submit constructive criticism regarding these terms, definitions and abbreviations.

Other Collectors Not Forgotten

Collectors of Siege and Necessity Pieces, and of Love Tokens, are asked to excuse the obvious lack of reference to their specialties in this sample issue.

The scribe doesn't collect either one, therefore, they were omitted from the original idea of CQ. Not that they weren't thought about.

Two correspondents, though, noted the absence of a "voice" for those specialties, and suggested they be included in CQ ... both pointed out that they are "kissin' cousins" to countermarks.

As the type for this issue was already set, it was decided, for economical reasons, to print "as is," and to explain the omission in this article.

Jess Peters To Auction Ray Byrne Collection

Ray Byrne's name and countermarks are practically synonymous. Likewise with Jess Peters' name and auction, or mail bid.

Putting the two names together, the collecting public has one of the finest countermark sales in many years.

The mail and floor auction of this collection is set for June 13-15, during C.O.I.N. in Los Angeles, Calif.

A very appealing feature of the catalog is Byrne's historical introductions and notes to each area or series. That alone, this writer believes, is worth the price of the catalog.

The plates and layout (not jammed together,) produced by Peters and crew are far above the average catalog. That, too, is worth the price of the catalog.

Having collected countermarks and pertinent numismatic literature for the past fifteen years, this writer predicts the Byrne - Peters catalog will become a classic. Not only will it become historically important, and used as a primary reference, the intrinsic value of each copy will increase year after year.

The standard edition is $5, including a prices realized list. The deluxe edition, to be issued about four weeks after the sale, is $15, and will include the prices realized.

Before all copies are gone, order from Jess Peters, Inc., Box 123, Decatur, Ill. 62525.

The Scribe's Scribbles ...

The Scribe's Scribbles will be the "bailiwick" of Carling Gresham, publisher and chief scribe of CQ. In essence, it will be an editorial column, devoted to any topic in numismatics, but primarily towards the collecting specialties outlined elsewhere in this issue.

Several sustaining features are planned for Coinquest, foremost among them being "CQ;" besides being the "handle" for the circular, CQ also has a meaning for radio "hams'.. It's an invitation to talk on shortwave, but in this instance, it's an invitation to write ... letters to the editor, if you like.

Intra Libris means (with) in the library. Hopefully, readers will submit book reviews for publication, regardless of the country of origin. The books need not be about cmks, love tokens or siege and necessity pieces ... anything numismatic.

Others, but very tenative: Ancient Age; for the collectors of ancient cmks. Indian Love Call; for shroffmark collectors. Whazit? For those cmks that defy all attempts of attribution. Noncents; or, don't spend any money on cmks listed therein. Chop Sticks; for, guess who.

If a note of levity has crept in, that's the way it's intended. I'm not really serious about all those headings, but a little humor doesn't hurt ... especially in these days and times. (I haven't seen an encouraging or humorous headline in months!)

Constructive suggestions are welcomed in this area.

Do it now!

SUBSCRIPTION TO CQ

NAME _____

Address _____

City & State _____

ZIP _____ Country _____

Soundex _____
(Please do not write in this space)
fgh

Enclosed is: ☐ $4.50 for first class delivery of a year's subscription in North America. (Please check.) ☐ $6 for air mail delivery of a year's subscription to another area.

My collecting specialties are: _____

You may – may not – (cross out one) _____
publish this information. Please sign or initial

Seven CQ Goals

The goals of CQ, as outlined by Gresham, are:

1. Dissemination of countermark information such as new finds, forgeries, die studies, historical information, etc.
2. Standardization of terms, e.g., what's the difference, if any, between countermark and counterstamp? Or, how about "counterpunched" instead of holed?
3. Compilation of all cmk, regardless of sources, metals, reasons, etc., for ultimate publication in catalog form.
4. Compilation of a bibliography of all known references to countermarks, for inclusion in such a catalog.
5. Encouragement of original research, and the submission of articles for publication in CQ or elsewhere.
6. Setting guidelines for attributing, authenticating and grading cmk.
7. To offer cmk collectors a common marketplace where they can advertise items they want to buy, sell or trade, including numismatic publications.

Which Bimonthly?

The first definition in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, eighth ed., reads: occurring every two months.

More Greetings From Coinquest . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

Generally, I'm not referring to those attributed, pedigreed specimens one views in impressive museum displays, nor to those in the collections of respected owners. This group is not, however, immune to criticism and inquiry; the greater the rarity, the more it should be subjected to scrutiny and questions by experts in the field.

Primarily I'm referring to that even LARGER group of unknown (unk,) unloved and unwanted cmks ... those that remain hidden in a cigar box, a bank vault, or "under the counter."

If you've been in numismatics for two or three years you probably have several unks stashed away someplace. If you've been collecting or dealing for ten or twenty years, or longer, you probably have a cigar box nearly filled with unks.

Most of us just can't cope with the vast number of unks floating around ... it isn't that we're stupid, or that we don't have an adequate library ... TIME is our main enemy; or, I should say, a lack of time.

If you don't think a problem exists, read what Ray Byrne has to say about unks: "One of the more interesting aspects of collecting 'coins' and 'cuts" of the Caribees is in **attempting** (my emphasis-CG) to attribute the constant flow of 'enigmas' or 'mystery' pieces." (There's more, but get a copy of the catalog from Jess Peters, Inc., and read it.)

Here is a man who is considered a "pro" in numismatics ... and I'd call him a "master" in the field of cmks ... yet, he admits that he is sometimes baffled by unks. (He lists 12 in the catalog, but I'm sure he has (had) many more in his collection ... at least, I know he has seen many, many more.)

If such a person has problems with unks, where does that leave the average collector or dealer? In a world of darkness ... that's where; at best, in a twilight world.

Collecting cmks is a narrow segment of numismatics, I know; I doubt if there are 5,000 cmk collectors in the entire world.

However, I must say this about the cmk collectors I know personally: They're more dedicated, more intense, in pursuit of knowledge of their collecting specialty than, say, a Lincoln collector, or a Carson City dollar collector, who usually just fill holes in an album or pieces of plastic.

(Now, I'm no bigot; I filled those little holes for more than ten years before I discovered some of the true rewards of numismatics. Besides, each has its place in the overall scheme of the hobby.)

The cmk collector, though, doesn't have a coin book with holes to fill ... he's trying to fill the holes in HISTORY books! And, therein lies the great difference between a collector and a numismatist.

"Buy the book before you buy the coin," is a sound advice that one often hears, but who can afford to buy **every** known reference to cmks? Hardly anyone. If you can afford it, though, and DO buy all of them, are you then prepared to buy **all** of the known references to the following: Hallmarks; ordnance marks; cutlery marks; swordsmith marks; gun proof marks; furniture marks; glass makers' marks; trademarks, etc., etc.? (There **are** more, dear reader, and in many languages!)

Oh, you bought all of those, too, huh? That's great ... I'm pleased for you ... but when're you going to find **time** to research all of those books? Or even a tenth of them?

You can't, of course, unless you can arrange to stay alive and healthy for two or three hundred years, and IF you don't buy any more books.

My numismatic library is nearly 1,000 volumes; everything from pamphlets to bound volumes of Spink's Numismatic Circular, which are counted as only one item or book, per volume. Even such a modest sized library presents its own, inherent problems. A totally complete numismatic library probably would number around 50,000 volumes! Any one person would go crazy in that number of books.

Coinquest is designed to alleviate the problems mentioned in this article. How? By pooling the knowledge, talents and resources of those who stand to benefit the most from such an endeavor ... cmk collectors and dealers themselves.

This is not an attempt at any sort of organization; there won't be any officers, meetings, or dues. It's a sincere attempt to collect and publish the knowledge available from those numismatists who have been working in the cmk field, and who are willing to share that knowledge with other "kindred souls."

The specific goals of Coinquest are detailed in another article elsewhere in this sample issue. Those goals may be modified, deleted or increased. (I had to begin someplace.) Any changes will be the will of those subscribers who decide to join me in this venture.

Annual subscription in North America is $4.50, delivered first class mail; subscriptions to other areas are $6 yearly, delivered Air Mail.

All fees will be placed in an escrow account until June 25, at which time the decision to publish will be made. In the event I don't receive 250 subscriptions, the project will end, and all monies will be returned to the senders.

That figure, 250, represents the quantity of a four page, 8 x 11 inch, book-style newsletter than can be printed at a minimum cost level. That is, anything less, say , 175 copies, costs the same amount as 250.

Won't you join me in this venture? Coinquest ... a conquest of the unknown.

COINQUEST
P.O. Box 87
Pomona Park, FL
32081

FIRST CLASS MAIL

DAVID E. SCHENKMAN
P.O. Box 274
INDIAN HEAD, MD 20640

CARLING GRESHAM

580
P. O. BOX [illegible], POMONA PARK, FLORIDA 32081
904-649-4501

8 August 75

Dear Friend;

This will be the last form letter you'll receive from me before the first regular issue of CQ, which will be mailed later this month, dated September. This letter is simply a means to up date information about CQ, and to advise you about the proposed mail bid sale.

You'll be pleased to know that CQ will be printed offset, as was the pilot issue; how long it'll remain printed that way is a matter of conjecture at this point, but we're starting "right," anyhow.

I'd like to remind all of you that you're entitled to two free classified ads to run in two consecutive issues of this first volume; i.e., the same ad, two times. A display rate card will be sent to those persons requesting one.

Originally I had hoped to conduct a regular auction for subscribers only, but the need for more publicity and subscribers has modified that idea. We'll now "go public," but consignments will be accepted only from subscribers...that will remain firm, unless I can't get a minimum of 500 lots for the auction.

I'm asking each of you, therefore, to submit twenty (20) lots for the sale: Countermarked items are preferred, but most anything will do; ancients, modern, foreign, medals, tokens, siege and necessity pieces, numismatic literature and publications, talers, dollars and pesos; gold, silver, copper, or whatever. Fifty per cent countermarks would seem to be a happy medium, with the "other" 50% giving us enough diversification to appeal to a greater number of prospective bidders.

"Highlight" of the sale will be a coin that I own; a German counterfeit (!) of a Polish coin, listed as Gumowski 2196 and Craig 25a. Craig values the coin at $200 in his second edition, but, after searching 900 catalogs, most of them European, I haven't found a single specimen offered; I believe the coin is quite rare. I've asked Mr. Craig for the basis of his valuation, but he hasn't yet had time to reply. The coin, commonly called an Ephriamite, was not found in the famous Lilly collection. Proceeds from the coin, less 10% for CQ's coffers, will be donated to the American Numismatic Society. (Who knows? A benefactor might buy the coin and give it to the Smithsonian...stranger things have happened.)

Before continuing, look at the bottom right corner of your address label and note the three digit number there: That is your Soundex number without an alpha prefix, which isn't needed at the moment; it's also your subscription number, assigned as the subs were received. Remember that number, please. If you submit any lots for the sale, every lot must have that number written thereon, along with other information, which I'll explain. First, though, I'll write a complete example for you, then I'll explain it, using Soundex 076 (the ANS.)

EXAMPLE: 076/14/20, indicating that this is lot number 14 of a total of 20 lots submitted by subscriber "076." If lot number 08 submitted by 076 contained, say, six items, of a total 20 lots, the numbers would be: 076/08-6/20. The first and last groups of numbers will remain the same for the complete consignment submitted; the middle group ONLY may/will change, sequentially, or be expanded when containing more than one item.

Place all items in 2 x 2 inch holders or envelopes; if an item is too large, place it in a larger envelope and seal it. Write your complete identification number in the upper left corner on the plain side (front) of holder or envelope. Indicate your catalog identification in the bottom left; in the bottom right, indicate the grade of the item, and in the upper right, place your estimate of a FAIR market value of the item.

(NOTE: All this "fuss and feathers" is to aid me in compiling the catalog; I'm ALL alone down at this end, without help of any kind, and these procedures are necessary to expedite the processes involved. In the production of CQ, and the catalog, I do EVERYTHING except typesetting and printing...editing, photography, layout, licking the stamps, etc., are my duties.)

Your coins/lots will NOT be given away; I don't intend to sell a $100 lot for $35, but I do RESERVE the right to sell any lot at a price I believe is fair. Also, I RESERVE the right to change any grading I believe to be inaccurate, so please be conservative. We're not out to "shaft" anyone in this sale, so follow the "golden rule."

For every ten lots submitted, indicate your first and second choices of single items to be illustrated: On the flip (back) side of the holder or envelope, indicate that choice by a Roman "I" or "II." (Just in case your first choice doesn't photograph well.) If you're willing to donate the proceeds from any coin to the ANS, please write "ANS" across the back of the holder/envelope. All such donations will be acknowledged.

Commission on each item sold to a bidder is a flat ten (10) per cent to subscribers, fifteen (15) per cent to all others. Lots unsold or "bid in" by me will be returned at consignors' expense for postage and registration. Consignors will receive free catalogs and prices realized; all others will be charged $3. SUBSCRIBERS, $2.00.

SHIPPING: Make three copies of invoice, include one with consignment, ship one copy to me by SEPARATE mail, keep one copy. SHIP REGISTERED!
DEADLINES: For consignments, September 9; catalogs to be ready October 7; CLOSING DATE, 11 a.m., November 11.
NOTE: Minimum bid level on ANY lot will be $5, so prepare lots accordingly. (Any lot may contain 10 items at 50¢ each, 2 items valued at $2.50 each, etc.)

Ciao! Carlton

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FIRST CLASS MAIL